

## REMARKS

Applicant notes with appreciation the clarity and detail provided by the Examiner in the statement of the rejections of the claims.

Claim 18 was objected to. Claim 18 has been amended to overcome this objection.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claim 7 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Claims 1-4, 7, 12-16 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Varfolomeeva '387. Claims 1, 3, 11, 12 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gessert '577. Because of the numerous amendments to the claims, these two rejections will be addressed together.

All the independent claims have been amended to more clearly define that the invention is a display rack comprised of at least two rack portion subassemblies which are comprised of front and rear positioned uprights and a plurality of either inclined or generally horizontal shelves attached to each of the subassemblies. The subassemblies have connectors for permitting one subassembly to be mounted on top of the other subassembly in a simple manner, for example, through the use of stakes and stake receiving sockets. Several variations of the connectors are defined in various of the dependent claims. Varfolomeeva discloses a display rack comprising a base, having a plurality of only rear positioned frame segments 34 apparently used to join together extension segments 36. There is a plurality of baskets 12 that are mounted on the frame through the use of a series of fasteners 62, but it is not clear how the fasteners mount the baskets to the frame. The display rack appears to be intended for the display of lightweight items. Regardless, there is no disclosure whatever in Varfolomeeva regarding a display assembly comprising a plurality of rack subassemblies with front and rear uprights with one subassembly being mounted on another subassembly to form a superposed series of

subassemblies comprising the assembled rack. In fact, the Varfolomeeva display rack teaches to the contrary in that it specifically requires the use of a series of frame segments and extension segments that are meant to be assembled to form a single unit and not a plurality of subassemblies. Further, there are no front and rear positioned upright supports, only rear upright supports. The structure of the present invention permits the display of relatively heavy product, while the display rack of Varfolomeeva apparently is intended for only lightweight products. Thus, with the amendments to the claims, the 102(b) rejection over Varfolomeeva must be withdrawn.

Gessert discloses a modular rack and storage system for use with such things as silk screens. The screens are intended to be stored in a generally vertically orientation between top downwardly facing channels and bottom upwardly facing channels. It does not disclose a display rack comprised of the plurality of subassemblies intended for superimposed mounting with each of the subassemblies having a plurality of shelf members in vertically spaced relationship and with a generally upwardly facing product support as now found in all the independent claims. Gessert only discloses a pair of storage racks which may be mounted in superposed relationship. The storage rack of Gessert is not adapted for the display of products, but rather for storage of planar articles between channels specifically required to open toward one another. Therefore, the 102(b) rejection of the claims over Gessert must be withdrawn.

It is noted that the problem solved by the present invention is entirely different than that addressed in either Gessert or Varfolomeeva. Gessert is a structure designed to hold generally planar articles, probably in a factory or work shop environment. The present invention is specifically designed for the display of consumer articles in a store or the like with the product being supported on the bottom by generally upwardly facing product supports. The present invention permits the assembly of easy to package and ship subassemblies that may then be

easily assembled in retail outlets with minimal effort while providing multiple product display shelves.

None of the other references cited even hint at such a structure.

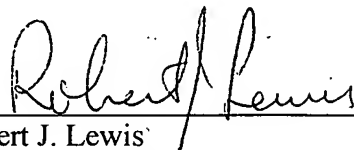
Claims 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, and 18-25 stand variously rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Because of the limitations now contained in all the independent claims, it is submitted that these claims distinguish over the various suggested combinations of references cited in support of the obviousness rejections. For this reason, it is submitted that the claims rejected for obviousness are also patentable. The rejected claims provide further distinguishment of the invention over the cited references.

It is submitted that the claims as amended, are in a condition for allowance which is respectfully solicited. If any issue regarding the allowability of any of the pending claims in the present application could be readily resolved whether action could be taken to further advance this application, such as an Examiner's Amendment, or if the Examiner should have any questions regarding this response, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner please telephone applicants' undersigned attorney in this regard.

Respectfully submitted

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Robert J. Lewis  
Registration 27210  
Blackwell Sanders Peper Martin  
720 Olive Street, Suite 2400  
St. Louis, MO 63101  
314-345-6443

Attorneys for Applicant